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SUBJECT: AFRICA FORUM CONGRATULATES PRESIDENT OBAMA

1. Former Mozambican president Joaquim Chissano, in his role as the chair of the Africa Forum of former African Leaders, presented a congratulatory letter for President Obama to the Charge on January 27 (text below; the signed original has been sent to the Department via courier). In addition, Chissano also told the Charge that he hopes the new administration will work for "more dialogue, more openness, and more investment" in Africa.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

His Excellency, Mr. Barack Obama
President
United States of America

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing, on behalf of the Forum for Former African Heads of State and Government and other African leaders, commonly known as the Africa Forum, and on my own behalf, to congratulate Your Excellency for the historic election victory and the subsequent inauguration as the 44th President of the United States on 20 January 2009.

The Africa Forum is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with special status. It was established by a group of Former African Heads of State and Government and other African leaders to provide a platform for retired African Presidents with democratic credentials, to continue to contribute collectively and individually to the social and economic advancement of Africa. Membership to the Forum is by invitation to African Former Heds of State and Government who qualify under the criteria of democratic-entry and democratic exits.

The current membership of the Forum includes thirty-seven (37) former African Heads of State and Government and six (6) eminent African personalities. The core competencies of the Forum include: Advisory, Advocacy, Facilitation and Leadership Development and Monitoring and Evaluation.

We, at the Forum, have listened to Your Excellency's inaugural speech very carefully and we believe that there are many areas of convergence of ideas. We are encouraged by Your Excellency's commitment to work closely with the poor nations of the world and to ensure a more rational and sustainable use of the world resources. We, therefore, look forward to sharing with Your Excellency our individual and collective experiences on how the United States of American and Africa can work together towards sustainable social and economic development as well as post-conflict reconstruction and development in Africa.

We understand the enormity of the challenges facing Your Excellency's administration both at the national and international levels and we wish Your Excellency every success in addressing these challenges.

Meanwhile, please accept, Mr. President, my congratulations and the assurances of my highest consideration.

\s\
Joaquim Chissano
Former President of Mozambique and chair of the Africa Forum

END TEXT

CHAPMAN